

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB, PINT, PGOV, AR

SUBJECT: BA GOVERNOR CALABRO PREACHES MODERATION

SUMMARY. BA GOVERNOR CALABRO BROKE RANKS WITH PRESIDENT AND PERONIST LABOR LEADERS ON MEANS TO COMBAT TERRORIST ACTIVITIES BY CALLING FOR A POLITICAL RATHER THAN "MILITARY APPROACH. HE ALSO CRITICIZED LABOR LEADERS FOR FORGETTING THEIR TRADE UNION RESPONSIBILITIES AND RELYING EXCLUSIVELY ON POLITICAL ALTERNATIVES, THEREBY CREATING DANGER OF LOSING CONTROL OF LABOR MOVEMENT TO "OTHERS WHO DO NOT SHARE OUR PHILOSOPHY". COMMENTATORS BELIEVE THAT HE IS OPENING BATTLE FOR GREATER ROLE IN ORGANIZED LABOR MOVEMENT, BUT CGT SOURCE ADVISED LABATT THAT HIS THINKING WILL NOT RECEIVE WARM WELCOME AT CGT. END SUMMARY.

1. IN RARE DEPARTURE FOR ORTHODOX PERONIST, BA GOVERNOR VICTOR CALABRO BROKE WITH PRESIDENT PERON AND PERONIST LABOR LEADERS IN CALLING FOR MODERATE APPROACHES TO RESOLUTION OF COUNTRY'S POLITICAL-SUBVERSIVE PROBLEMS. IN CONTRAST WITH ISABEL'S LABOR DAY STATEMENT THAT SHE HAD LOST PATIENCE WITH SUBVERSIVE GROUPS AND WOULD USE WHATEVER FORCE NECESSARY AGAINST THEM, HE CALLED FOR POLITICAL RATHER THAN MILITARY SOLUTION TO SUBVERSIVE ACTIVITIES. SPEAKING AT MAY 2 OPENING OF BUENOS AIRES PROVINCE LEGISLATURE, CALABRO RECALLED THAT MANY OF THE SUBVERSIVES HAD BEEN "FELLOW SOLDIERS" DURING THE EXILE OF GENERAL PERON. HE

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CALLED FOR AN END TO VIOLENCE BY ALL CONCERNED AND A NATIONAL

RECONCILIATION THROUGH AN "OPEN AND FRANK DIALOGUE" WITH ALL GROUPS.

2. IN SPEAKING WITH REPORTERS CALABRO ALSO HAD HARSH WORDS FOR MANY OF HIS FELLOW TRADE UNIONISTS. HE SAID BOTH THOSE WHO OCCUPY POLITICAL POSITIONS AND THOSE WHO ARE ONLY CONCERNED WITH TRADE UNION MATTERS HAVE FORGOTTEN THAT THEIR MAJOR DUTY IS TO WORK "TO STRENGTHEN THE TRADE UNION INSTITUTIONS". AS A RESULT OF THEIR FAILURE IN THAT ASPECT, AND THEIR RELIANCE ON "RESULTS FROM ABOVE", THEY ARE LOSING THE SUPPORT OF THE TRADE UNION MEMBERSHIP TO OTHERS WHO ARE NOT IDENTIFIED WITH THE PERONIST PHILOSOPHY. CALABRO SUGGESTED THAT THEY SHOULD ALL WORK WITH THE BASES, "IN THE FACTORIES", OR THE CURRENT LABOR LEADERS WILL LOSE THE BANNERS AND CONQUESTS THAT OTHERS HAVE WON.

3. COMMENT. SELF-CRITICISM BY A MAJOR LABOR LEADER IS AN UNUSUAL PHENOMENA IN PERONIST POLITICS. CALABRO'S BREAK WITH THAT TRADITION IS CONSIDERED BY SOME TO BE AN ATTEMPT ON HIS PART TO ESTABLISH HIMSELF AS A MAJOR LABOR SPOKESMAN. ONE WELL ESTABLISHED NEWS COMMENTATOR SUGGESTED THAT CALABRO IS ANGLING FOR A RENOVATION OF THE PERONIST 62 ORGANIZATIONS AND A POSITION OF CONSIDERABLY INCREASED RESPONSIBILITY FOR HIMSELF. IF SO, HE WILL SOON FIND HIMSELF IN OPEN CONFRONTATION WITH FELLOW UOM LEADER LORENZO MIGUEL. CALABRO'S RELATIONS WITH MIGUEL HAVE BEEN LESS THAN OPTIMUM AS HE REPORTEDLY FOLLOWED A TOO INDEPENDENT LINE IN RUNNING THE PROVINCE. HOWEVER, HE HAS ALWAYS AVOIDED ANY DIRECT CONFRONTATION WITH MIGUEL. WHILE HIS POSITION AS PRESENTED ABOVE DOES NOT NECESSARILY MEAN HE IS STRIKING OUT ON HIS OWN, IT COULD BE THE FIRST SALVO. IN AN ABBREVIATED CONVERSATION A CGT EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBER TOLD LABATT THAT CGT HAD NOT YET DISCUSSED CALABRO'S REMARKS, BUT THAT IN NO WAY DID THEY REPRESENT CGT THINKING. THEREFORE, IT IS UNLIKELY THAT HIS POSITION WILL RECEIVE MUCH SUPPORT FROM ANY SECTOR OF THE ORGANIZED LABOR MOVEMENT.
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